

# T<sup>3</sup>: Trustee Training Tips

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## FINDING (AND GETTING) THE RIGHT PERSON

A new season has just started: recruiting new members for the library board and everyone is hoping to find that MVP to add to their team. But just like the major leagues, these players do not simply fall into place—they must be found and wooed. Unlike sports, libraries can take a long time to get that exceptional person to sign on and sometimes that is simply a matter of perseverance.

Where do you start? Not with *whom* but with *what* is a good beginning. Look at your current board makeup and your long-range plan. What skills will you be needing in the next few years? Are those skills represented sufficiently now? If not, this is the time to find them.

KRS 173..725 and companion statutes .480; .340; .040 state that appointments to the library board ...“shall attempt to assure, to the extent permitted...that the board includes members from different geographical areas....” This is not to be interpreted by so strict a measure that artificial lines are drawn that cannot be crossed. A library needs a diverse board, but diversity comes in more ways than the street upon which one lives. Your board needs a mix of age, gender, race, occupation, and anything else that helps reflect the county population. You should never skip the best person simply because she doesn’t live in the right “zone” this particular time.

On the following pages there is a set of Board Profile Worksheets that may help you through the process. Each remaining trustee is invited to fill out the individual profile (insert) and then those are compiled into the whole board profile form. This will give you a quick snapshot of current members and what gaps exist in your board. The form is set up to accommodate two vacancies and four possible candidates, but you can make it work for only one vacancy simply by changing the new candidate column A or current members 4. Use the individual profile to assess potential candidates or ask them to fill out one on themselves.

Many non-profits spend years courting the people they want to serve on their boards, so just because your target trustee doesn’t say “yes” this year doesn’t mean you give up. A smart board will keep a Potential Trustee File running at all times, constantly adding new names and updating existing names. Never make the assumption that someone will say “no.” It just may take them longer to say “yes” than anticipated.

## LIBRARY BOARD PROFILE WORKSHEET

This tool helps to identify current gaps and desired characteristics of your board. Don't presume to know the complete skill set possessed by your board. Rather, have each trustee complete and return the individual profile to a selected person for compilation into a summary profile to be shared with the board. Names of individual trustees should not appear on the summary profile. The focus should be on skills and experiences rather than individuals. This summary profile should then serve as a discussion piece for identifying gaps that you wish to be filled.

CATEGORIES TO CONSIDER	CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS			NEW BOARD CANDIDATES			
Areas of Expertise/Professional Skills:	1	2	3	A	B	C	D
Organization Management							
Finance							
Accounting							
Banking and Trusts							
Investments							
Fund Raising							
Law / Legal							
Marketing							
Public Relations							
Publicity							
Personnel / Human Resources							
Physical Facilities / Construction							
Real Estate							
Strategic or Long-Range Planning							
Technology							
Other: <i>specify</i>							
<b>Diversity Profile:</b>							
Age:							
18—35							
36—50							
51—65							
66 +							
Race/Ethnic Background:							
African-American							
Asian/Pacific Islander							
Caucasian							
Hispanic/Latino							
Native American							
Other: <i>specify</i>							
Gender:							
Male							
Female							

CATEGORIES TO CONSIDER	CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS			NEW BOARD CANDIDATES			
	1	2	3	A	B	C	D
Geographic Location:							
County Seat							
North End of County							
South End of County							
East End of County							
West End of County							
Education:							
Graduate Degree (or higher)							
Undergraduate Degree							
Vocational/Technical College							
Some College							
High School Graduate							
Community Connections:							
Corporate							
Disability							
Education							
Media							
Political							
Religious Organizations							
Small Business							
Social Services							
Other: <i>specify</i>							
<b>Personal Qualities:</b>							
Library User							
Library Supporter/Believes in Mission							
Previous Library Board Service:							
2 terms or more							
1 term							
Less than 1 term							
Leadership Skills							
Willingness to Work							
Willing to Make Tough Decisions							
Willing to Serve as Officer/on Committees							
Teamworker							
Personal Style in Group Settings:							
Compromiser							
Leader							
Analyzer							
Visionary							
Continuing Board Development:							
Willing to Attend Workshops							
Willing to Attend Conferences							
Commitment to Intellectual Freedom							
Commitment to Equal Access							

## LIBRARY BOARD PROFILE WORKSHEET-INDIVIDUAL

This tool helps to identify current gaps and desired characteristics of your board. Each trustee completes the individual profile on him/herself and returns it to a selected person for compilation into a summary profile to be shared with the board. Names of individual trustees should not appear on the summary profile. The focus should be on skills and experiences rather than individuals. This summary profile should then serve as a discussion piece for identifying gaps that you wish to be filled.

<b>Areas of Expertise/Professional Skills:</b>	✓
Organization Management	
Finance	
Accounting	
Banking and Trusts	
Investments	
Fund Raising	
Law / Legal	
Marketing	
Public Relations	
Publicity	
Personnel / Human Resources	
Physical Facilities / Construction	
Real Estate	
Strategic or Long-Range Planning	
Technology	
Other: <i>specify</i>	
<b>Diversity Profile:</b>	
Age:	
18—35	
36—50	
51—65	
66 +	
Race/Ethnic Background:	
African-American	
Asian/Pacific Islander	
Caucasian	
Hispanic/Latino	
Native American	
Other: <i>specify</i>	
Gender:	
Male	
Female	
Geographic Location:	
County Seat	
North End of County	
South End of County	
East End of County	

	✓
West End of County	
Education:	
Graduate Degree (or higher)	
Undergraduate Degree	
Vocational/Technical College	
Some College	
High School Graduate	
Community Connections:	
Corporate	
Disability	
Education	
Media	
Political	
Religious Organizations	
Small Business	
Social Services	
Other: <i>specify</i>	
<b>Personal Qualities:</b>	
Library User	
Library Supporter/Believes in Mission	
Previous Library Board Service:	
2 terms or more	
1 term	
Less than 1 term	
Leadership Skills	
Willingness to Work	
Willing to Make Tough Decisions	
Willing to Serve as Officer/on Committees	
Teamworker	
Personal Style in Group Settings:	
Compromiser	
Leader	
Analyzer	
Visionary	
Continuing Board Development:	
Willing to Attend Workshops	
Willing to Attend Conferences	
Commitment to Intellectual Freedom	
Commitment to Equal Access	

## LIBRARY LETTERS

*Dear Marian Librarian,*

*Does the whole board need to vote on a potential trustee?*

*-- Troubled Trustee*

Dear Troubled,

Yes. It is not a decision that the departing trustee makes and it is most definitely not a decision the director makes. Each name should be discussed by the whole board, and while the director may have opinions to share, it is a decision left to the board as a whole, meeting in public, and with a quorum present.

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